

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-18, which were all of the then pending claims, under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,960,337 (Brewster, et al.) in view of U.S. Patent 6,028,514 (Lemelson, et al.).

Independent Claims 1, 7 and 13 are being amended to better define the subject matter of these claims. Also, Claims 2, 8 and 14 are being amended to improve the form of these claims, and Claims 5, 11 and 17 are being cancelled to reduce the number of pending issues.

For the reasons advanced below, Claims 1-4, 6-10, 12-16 and 18 patentably distinguish over the prior art and are allowable. The Examiner is thus asked to reconsider and to withdraw the rejection of Claims 1-4, 6-10, 12-16 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. §103, and to allow these claims.

The present invention relates to a procedure for providing help to people with disabilities by organizing and using a network of people with disabilities and of people who have volunteered to help those with the disabilities. In this procedure, a first database is established with information about the people with disabilities, and a second database is established with information about the volunteers. When a disabled person makes a request for help, a matching server uses information from the established databases to match the person making the request with a volunteer who may be able to help.

Brewster, et al. discloses a procedure for providing help to an emergency event. When an operator is informed of such an event, the operator selects from a group of Emergency Assistance Services (EAS), the EAS who can reach the emergency site in the shortest time, and the operator then notifies that selected EAS.

Lemelson discloses a system for warning individuals of a variety of types of emergencies or dangerous situations in their immediate vicinity. A warning unit is carried by the person to be notified, and this warning unit may also monitor for various medical conditions of the wearer.

There is a very important general difference between the present invention and the systems disclosed in Brewster, et al. and Lemelson. In particular, while the present invention can be used in emergency situation, it is not specifically designed primarily to address such situations. In contrast, both Brewster, et al. and Lemelson are specifically directed to situations that are more of an emergency nature.

This general difference is reflected in a number of more specific differences between this invention and the procedures disclosed in Brewster, et al. and Lemelson. For example, this invention uses pre-established databases both of volunteers and those who might need help, while neither Brewster, et al. nor Lemelson match data from such a pair of pre-established databases.

This feature of the invention is of utility for a number of reasons. For example, the databases used in this invention may be provided with significantly more information than the databases used in Brewster, et al. and Lemelson. In particular, with the procedure shown in Brewster, et al., it may be very difficult, or practically impossible to obtain significant amounts of information at the time of the emergency. With the present invention, in contrast, substantial amounts of information can be obtained before the actual need to use that information.

Independent Claims 1, 7 and 13 clearly describe the above-discussed feature of the invention. Specifically, Claims 1 and 13 positively set forth the steps of establishing a first database identifying a plurality of people with disabilities, and establishing a second database identifying a plurality of volunteers. Also, both of these claims set forth the step of, in response to a request from one of the persons with a disability, using a matching server to use information

from the pre-established first and second databases to match the person making the request with at least one of the volunteers. Claim 7, which is directed to a system for providing help too people with disabilities, includes analogous apparatus limitations.

The other references of record have been reviewed, and it is believed that these other references, whether they are considered individually or in combination, are not believed to be any more pertinent than Brewster, et al. or Lemelson.

Because of the above-discussed differences between Claims 1, 7 and 13 and the prior art, and because of the advantages associated with those differences, Claims 1, 7 and 13 patentably distinguish over the prior art and are allowable. Claims 2-4 and 6 are dependent from, and are allowable with Claim 1; and Claims 8-10 and 12 are dependent from Claim 7 and are allowable therewith. Similarly, Claims 14-16 and 18 are dependent from Claim 7 and are allowable therewith.

Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and to withdraw the rejection of Claims 1-4, 6-10, 12-16 and 18, and to allow these claims.

Every effort has been made to place this case in condition for allowance, a notice of which is requested. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference with Applicants' Attorneys would be advantageous to the disposition of this case, the Examiner is asked to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully Submitted,

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